

Message Text

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SUBJ: AMERICAN TOURISTS DISCOVER SENEGAL/GOS PLANS US
TOURIST OFFICE

1. SUMMARY: NEARLY 500 AMERICAN TOURISTS HAVE VISITED SENEGAL IN PAST TWO WEEKS AS FIRST EXPERIMENT IN US-SENEGAL TURNAROUND AIRCRAFT CHARTERS. GOS AND PRIVATE FIRMS IN SENEGAL HAVE GIVEN PUBLICITY AND FULL COOPERATION TO US TOUR PROMOTERS IN HOPE THAT PRESENT VISITORS PRESAGE INCREASING NUMBER OF AMERICAN TOURISTS IN SENEGAL'S JUNE-OCTOBER OFF-SEASON. DIRECTOR GENERAL OF TOURISM FALL HAS INFORMED AMBASSADOR OF SENEGAL'S INTENTION TO OPEN TOURIST PROMOTION OFFICE IN US, AND REQUESTS THAT USG ADVISE OF ANY SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS AND PROVIDE ALL APPROPRIATE ASSISTANCE. END SUMMARY.

2. AMERICAN TOUR GROUPS TOTALLING ABOUT 500 PERSONS VISITED SENEGAL JUNE 21-28 AND JULY 28-AUGUST 5. TOURISTS WERE PRIMARILY FROM NEW YORK AND PHILADELPHIA AREAS, TRANSPORTED BY TRANS INTERNATIONAL AIRWAYS DC-8 CHARTERS ARRANGED BY EAST-WEST HOLIDAYS, INC., 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH NEW YORK. DAVID AND ROBERT EASTMAN, OWNERS OF EAST-WEST, WORKED CLOSELY WITH SENEGAL TOURS (LOCAL TRAVEL AGENT), GOS DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF TOURISM AND LOCAL MERIDIEN HOTELS PERSONNEL, FROM ALL OF WHOM THERE HAS BEEN ENTHUSIASTIC COOPERATION IN MAKING ARRANGEMENTS FOR FIRST EXPERIMENT IN TOURIST CHARTERS FROM US WITH SENEGAL AS SOLE DESTINATION. AMBASSADOR AND EMBASSY OFFICERS GAVE GENERAL BRIEFING ON UNCLASSIFIED

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JULY 29 FOR INTERESTED VISITORS. PRESS COVERAGE DURING

VISITS HAS BEEN SUBSTANTIAL, WITH PROMINENT EMPHASIS ON CLOSE COOPERATION BETWEEN GOS, EMBASSY AND PRIVATE PARTIES. SENEGALESE TOURIST OFFICIALS HAVE MADE CLEAR THEY CONSIDER THIS FIRST MOVE TOWARD MAJOR EFFORTS TO DEVELOP US TOURIST MARKET.

3. MOUSTAPHA FALL, US-EDUCATED DIRECTOR GENERAL OF TOURISM, CALLED AMBASSADOR JULY 30 TO DISCUSS "AMERICAN TOURIST BOOM." HE SAID HEE WANTED TO EXPRESS THANKS FOR SUPPORT GIVEN BY EMBASSY. HE INFORMED US THAT GOS PLANS TO OPEN TOURIST OFFICE IN NEAR FUTURE IN US. FALL SAID GOS WOULD APPRECIATE ANY HELP WHICH DEPARTMENT OF STATE AND OTHER USG AGENCIES CAN GIVE IN OBTAINING NECESSARY AUTHORITY TO OPEN OFFICE AND GET IT INTO OPERATION. HE EMPHASIZED RAPIDITY WITH WHICH GOS WISHES TO PROCEED ON THIS PROJECT. FALL SUGGESTED THAT ANY INFORMATION ON SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR OFFICE BE PASSED TO GOS AMBASSADOR TO US COLBARY (BUT EMBASSY WOULD ALSO LIKE TO BE KEPT INFORMED OF OUR RESPONSE TO FALL'S REQUEST).

4. FYI: JEAN BONNER, WHO IS CURRENTLY IN SENEGAL ASSISTING WITH TOURISTS' PROGRAM AS SALES AND MARKETING AGENT FOR EAST-WEST HOLIDAYS, TOLD EMBASSY THAT SHE HAS BEEN ENGAGED BY D-G OF TOURISM TO OPEN SENEGAL'S TOURIST OFFICE IN US. MISS BONNER, OF VIRGIN ISLANDS ORIGIN, APPEARS TO BE EXPERIENCED PROFESSIONAL IN TRAVEL FIELD. SHE SAYS THAT SHE ALSO HOLDS POSITION AS SABENA REPRESENTATIVE AND HAS CLOSE TIES TO AIR AFRIQUE. AGGREY

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